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Multilingualism

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/292, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-ninth session, a comprehensive report on the full implementation of its resolutions on multilingualism. It provides an update on the activities undertaken to promote multilingualism throughout the various activities of the Secretariat since the submission of the previous report on this subject (A/67/311) in 2012.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/292, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-ninth session, a comprehensive report on the full implementation of its resolutions on multilingualism. The report provides an update on the activities undertaken to promote multilingualism throughout the activities of the Secretariat since the submission of the previous report on this subject (A/67/311) in 2012.

II. Multilingualism at the United Nations

A. Coordination of multilingualism

2. In response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 61/266, on 29 May 2008 the Secretary-General appointed the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information as Coordinator for Multilingualism. The Coordinator oversaw the compilation of this report, which was prepared with inputs from an informal network of focal points throughout the Secretariat.

3. The present report highlights activities undertaken to promote multilingualism by various departments and offices within the Secretariat. The examples are not exhaustive, instead presenting an overview of actions taken on important dimensions of multilingualism, as well as challenges encountered in that regard. The Coordinator for Multilingualism could benefit from rotation of staff among key offices, which would bring different perspectives to bear on how the Coordinator's role might be used to enhance multilingualism and to reflect the practical aspects of implementing a principle with far-reaching implications for the entire Organization.

B. Human resources management

4. The diversity of individuals working for the United Nations itself has served to promote multilingualism. Multilingualism among staff helps promote international understanding, dialogue, unity and mutual tolerance in a diverse environment.

1. Training

5. The language and communications programmes for staff members have continued to expand their resources and services. In 2013, an online language learning tool was piloted for staff at duty stations with no access to language training. As of April 2014, 1,000 staff members had used this self-paced learning tool. In 2014, a new advisory services function was launched to support language learning needs in the field. It will enable field missions to request specialized language training to help with mission-specific needs. In addition, a new online language testing system was launched at Headquarters and will be progressively deployed in other Secretariat duty stations.

6. Since September 2012, a total of 5,658 registrations for 688 language courses, ranging from regular language classes grouped by proficiency levels to classes focused on specific skills, have been organized at Headquarters.

2. Recruitment

7. The United Nations careers portal is fully bilingual in English and French. Secretariat job openings are published in the two working languages, as well as instructions and all other tools designed to facilitate applications by potential candidates. Information on recruitment policies is available on the Organization's website in the six official languages. In addition, the Office of Human Resources Management is developing a new human resources portal in English and French to be launched in 2014 that will consolidate human resources information from many different websites and will be available to external and internal users.

3. Outreach

8. Outreach efforts in the area of human resources have emphasized the importance of multilingualism, with outreach missions focusing on regions, countries and universities that attract multilingual individuals. In 2013 and 2014, missions were undertaken to Barbados, Brazil, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Jamaica, Japan, Mongolia, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, with further missions planned. The Office of Human Resources Management placed advertisements in news media, including French-language newspapers, to encourage applicants with a range of language skills. Positions in the Secretariat are also advertised on multilingual websites and social media, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Sina Weibo. Radio spots were prepared and disseminated in all official languages to advertise the young professionals programme, which emphasizes language skills in its selection process. The Office also produced a promotional video, "Women of the United Nations making a difference", in all six official languages to attract more women applicants for positions throughout the Secretariat.

4. Umoja

9. Umoja is the enterprise resource planning project designed to facilitate and streamline information between all business functions across the global Secretariat. By 2016, the Secretariat will have transitioned to Umoja as its central administrative system. While Umoja itself will operate in English, a French version of its website was initiated in January 2014 and an Arabic version is currently in preparation, developed in collaboration with the Department of Public Information.

5. Capital master plan

10. The installation, under the capital master plan, of the new Congress microphone and simultaneous interpretation system in the General Assembly Building in 2014 will complete the deployment of digital technology that enables the provision of high-quality language services to delegates and other conference participants at Headquarters. Other technology to be installed as part of the capital master plan relating to the storage, management and broadcast of digital audio and video files, once operational, will also contribute to the advancement of multilingualism. In addition, the permanent signage installed in public areas of the Headquarters buildings and the new automated floor announcement system in the elevators are in the two working languages of the Secretariat.

6. Information and communications technology

11. In 2013, the Office of Information and Communications Technology conducted a technical review of United Nations websites which found that sites operated by various parts of the Secretariat were fragmented and inconsistent in terms of technical standards, security and provision of content in the six official languages.

12. As the Secretariat requires a comprehensive solution for developing and hosting web technologies, the Office is developing standardized technologies and procedures that can be used to rapidly design and deploy websites with a web content management system that fully supports multilingualism and the translation workflow processes used by departments.

13. In the future, the Office of Information and Communications Technology intends to invite content owners to review their respective websites and support the migration of pertinent and updated content into a website environment that is easy to maintain and monitor, thereby improving the ability to maintain multilingual web content.

C. Department for General Assembly and Conference Management

1. Conference services

14. With its global staff dedicated to providing a wide range of conference and language services, including interpretation and translation and related services, in the six official languages (plus translation into German in selected cases), the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management plays an important role in ensuring the mandated multilingualism of the intergovernmental processes in the Organization.

2. Official documentation

15. With respect to the provision of parliamentary documents to intergovernmental bodies, the Department continues to comply strictly with the rule of simultaneous distribution, for which it counts on translators, interpreters, verbatim reporters, terminologists, editors, reference assistants, précis-writers, copy preparers, proofreaders, text processors and printing and distribution officers based in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi.

3. Outreach and succession planning

16. In order to maintain ready access to and enhance the quality and timeliness of the full range of the services it provides, the Department relies on a very large pool of in-house staff and external language professionals working in the six official languages as well as in German. International language competitive examinations are conducted as needed for the recruitment of Arabic-, Chinese-, English-, French-, Spanish- and Russian-speaking staff in order to keep the capacity at required levels.

17. The Department has been actively pursuing succession planning through its Universities Outreach Programme under which its staff provide, on a pro bono basis, pedagogical assistance, mentoring and training to students at 22 universities in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.

18. The Department maintains a number of websites in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish and German. In addition, it has seven dedicated English-language websites that provide information on meetings, e-subscription services, the *Journal of the United Nations*, the Committee on Conferences, the calendar of conferences, the Protocol and Liaison Service and language outreach.

D. Peacekeeping, security, political and legal offices and departments

1. Department of Peacekeeping Operations

19. Of the 16 peacekeeping operations and one special political mission led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, six operate in French-speaking countries and areas, namely the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Mali and Western Sahara. In 2013, 45 per cent of all uniformed peacekeepers were employed at these locations. To increase the recruitment of French-speaking personnel for service in francophone host countries, the Department works closely with partners such as the International Organization of la Francophonie. The Department has broadened the base of its francophone police-contributing countries, organizing two workshops in Burkina Faso in 2012 and Morocco in 2013 to assist Member States in increasing their participation in peacekeeping operations.

20. The Department also continues to translate guidance, training and policy materials from English into other United Nations languages. The landmark *United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual*, for instance, is currently being translated into French. Most trainings for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) are available in both English and French.

21. In addition, peacekeeping missions have continued to undertake efforts to promote multilingualism and conduct public information outreach in several languages. Radio Okapi of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo broadcasts in five languages, including the country's four national languages. The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) conducts information campaigns through radio and traditional communicators in Liberian English and more than 10 local languages, to reach maximum coverage. UNMIL Radio also broadcasts in French to reach Ivorian refugees residing in Liberia. In neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire, UNOCI FM is considering the possibility of broadcasting in five local languages in the lead-up to the 2015 elections. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan produces public information documentation, including on its website, in the national Afghan languages, Dari and Pashto, and airs radio programmes in Dari, Pashto and English.

22. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations produces content for the United Nations peacekeeping website. With the assistance of the Department of Public Information, nearly all of the information on the site is translated from English into the other five official languages. Fourteen of the 16 peacekeeping missions also maintain their own local websites. Six of these are bilingual: English/French or English/Arabic.

2. Department of Political Affairs

23. Given the global responsibilities of the Department of Political Affairs in peacemaking and preventive diplomacy, the promotion of multilingualism, both at Headquarters and in the field, has been central to carrying out its mandate.

24. Proficiency in the official languages, as well as in non-official languages, allows the Department's desk officers to follow political developments in major regions of the world. The political missions and peacebuilding offices operating under the supervision of the Department of Political Affairs in Africa, Asia and the Middle East carry out their work in official and non-official languages according to the exigencies of each country environment. For example, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia conducts outreach in Somali, while the United Nations Office in Burundi produces public information products in French and Kirundi and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau uses English, French and Portuguese in meetings and documents. Furthermore, the Department was instrumental in producing advocacy products in Sango, the national language of the Central African Republic, in an attempt to help quell the violence.

25. The Department's mediation roster and the standby team of mediation experts are further examples of the Organization's efforts to promote multilingualism. Five of the eight members of the standby team and almost all of the 194 active experts on the mediation roster speak two or more languages. In addition to the six official United Nations languages, services on the mediation roster are available in 55 other languages.

26. United Nations Peacemaker, a database for peacemaking professionals that was relaunched in 2012, features over 750 peace agreements and related materials, many of which are available in the original language as well as in the six official United Nations languages. Two of the five official United Nations mediation guidance materials are available in several languages: United Nations Guidance for Effective Mediation is available in all six official languages as well as in Finnish, Slovene and Turkish, and Guidance for Mediators: Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements is available in all six official United Nations languages.

27. As part of its responsibility to support the Security Council, the Department of Public Information continues to publish the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* in all six official languages. In 2012, the Department launched an enhanced website in all six official languages, as well as a revamped Council website. The Department is also working to launch websites for the subsidiary organs of the Council in the six official languages.

3. Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect

28. The Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect maintains a website that regularly updates all key sections in the six official languages. Official reports, such as the annual report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the responsibility to protect, are available in all six official languages. Supporting documents such as press statements and policy papers, and other documents prepared for specific events are translated as needed, with support from event partners.

29. The Office continues to engage with Member States and regional and subregional organizations in local languages. For example, the Office provided training in Spanish for Argentina, Costa Rica, Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay. In April 2014, the Office organized a training workshop for Syrian civil society organizations in Turkey in Arabic, with documents and presentations also in Arabic.

4. Office for Disarmament Affairs

30. The Office for Disarmament Affairs organizes programmes and special events in the field of disarmament in all six official languages and in non-official languages, produces publications such as *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* and maintains databases for specialized areas.

31. In support of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), aimed at preventing non-State actors from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has organized three seminars in 2014 to encourage 22 countries, many in Africa, which had not yet reported to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on their efforts to comply with the resolution. Since 2012, the Office has published, with the Center for International Trade and Security of the University of Georgia in the United States of America, *1540 Compass*, a journal containing articles on action taken to implement the resolution. Some issues of the journal have been published in Arabic, Chinese and French, as well as in English. The Union of Arab Banks has offered to translate *1540 Compass* into Arabic on a pro bono basis.

32. One of the most popular publications of the Office for Disarmament Affairs has been *Disarmament: A Basic Guide*, produced in collaboration with the Non-Governmental Organization Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security. The *Guide*, published initially in English, was subsequently translated into the other official languages and e-published. It aims to inform, educate and generate public support for, and understanding of, the importance of multilateral action in the field of arms limitation and disarmament.

33. In order to continue facilitating communication among the participants at the multilateral and multilingual meetings serviced by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Geneva Branch of the Office undertook an exercise with the relevant services at the United Nations Office at Geneva to standardize the terminology used at the Conference on Disarmament, including its verbatim records. Moreover, the Office continues to provide substantive, editorial and technical assistance to States parties to the disarmament treaties in as many official languages as possible.

5. Peacebuilding Support Office

34. The Peacebuilding Support Office continued its efforts to promote multilingualism in its support to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and management of the Peacebuilding Fund. The Office developed the guiding principles on young people's participation in peacebuilding with the non-governmental organization Search for Common Ground, through the Sub-Working Group on Youth Participation in Peacebuilding of the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development. These principles were translated into Arabic, French, Spanish and Russian.

35. The Peacebuilding Support Office continued to work with the Department of Public Information to translate the content of its website and that of the Peacebuilding Commission from English into the other official languages. As part of its efforts to find cost-neutral solutions to providing content in all official languages, the Office often relied on texts of relevant United Nations official documents that had already been issued in the six official languages.

6. Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict

36. The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict launched its official website in 2013 in the six official languages. The Office also compiles the annual reports of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict, which is available in all official languages. The Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict published its 2013 annual report in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

37. To promote advocacy and awareness on the issue of sexual violence in conflict, the Office issues press releases and op-eds in English and French and, occasionally, in Spanish. Devising social media content in multiple languages is very challenging and time-consuming. Furthermore, languages that would be most effective in terms of the Office's outreach, namely Lingala and Swahili, are not official United Nations languages and the Office does not have the in-house expertise to reach audiences for whom these are the primary languages.

7. Office of Legal Affairs

38. The Office of Legal Affairs produces publications devoted to the development of international law such as the *United Nations Juridical Yearbook*, the *Summaries of Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders of the International Court of Justice, International Instruments related to the Prevention and Suppression of International Terrorism* and *The Work of the International Law Commission*. All of these are available in the six official languages, while other publications are translated into several different languages.

39. The Office also hosts the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, which contains a permanent collection of recorded lectures in the official languages from different regions and legal systems. These lectures are transcribed and translated to the extent possible, depending on available resources. The Historic Archives of the Audiovisual Library publishes introductory and procedural history notes in all official languages. Legal and audiovisual materials are provided in all official languages, where available.

40. The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, acting as secretariat of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, continued to publish its annual publication entitled *The Law of the Sea: A Select Bibliography*, which includes citations in English, French and Spanish. The Division also publishes the *Law of the Sea Bulletin* every four months in English, French and Spanish.

41. The International Trade Law Division of the Office of Legal Affairs, acting as the secretariat for the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, maintains the Commission's website in the six official languages, providing case-law summaries from around the globe.

E. Humanitarian, human rights, economic and social offices

1. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

42. Throughout the reporting period, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs made progress in making its information products available in official languages in over 50 countries. The Office's flagship brochure, "This is OCHA", is available in all official languages. Its main planning and budget document for 2012-2013 is available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Public information materials, including for World Humanitarian Day (19 August), are produced in multiple languages and, depending on regional requirements, are produced in Arabic, English, French or Spanish and translated into other languages, as appropriate. Almost all of the Office's "on message" series are available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Office translates much of its content into Arabic and Hebrew. Generic guidelines on humanitarian civil-military coordination and the use of military and civil defence assets developed by the Office are available in all official languages on its website.

43. While the website of the Office is in English, it features content in other languages. Field web platforms were launched in French in the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and the Niger and at the Regional Office for West and Central Africa. In May and June 2014, the Office launched its first interactive microsites to raise awareness of the humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic and to generate interest around the report Saving Lives Today and Tomorrow: Managing the Risk of Humanitarian Crises, published in both English and French. In May 2014, the Office launched its French-language Twitter account. It has secured an Arabic Facebook presence and has a Twitter handle in Arabic for a Twitter account that is to be launched. The Office also manages two popular websites that support the humanitarian community. ReliefWeb has platforms in English, French and Spanish, and contains documents in Arabic as well. IRIN (Integrated Regional Information Networks) is an online humanitarian news and analysis service that delivers reports to more than 1 million online readers in Arabic, English and French.

2. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

44. As of June 2014, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) had collected translations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in a record 437 languages, a significant increase from the 384 translations reported in 2012. The translations are available from the dedicated web page of the OHCHR website.

45. Between July 2012 and June 2014, the Office produced and translated 33 new titles, the majority of which were in English while some were in all official languages. The Office's main planning document, *OHCHR Management Plan 2014-2017: Working for Your Rights*, is available in English with summaries in all six official languages. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was translated by the OHCHR Regional Office for Central America in Panama into Embera, Guna, Ngäbe and Wounaan.

46. Although most of the capacity-building and human rights training sessions and public briefings at OHCHR are held in English, efforts have been made to diversify the languages in which these are provided. In addition to training in all official

languages, OHCHR had occasion to use Burmese, Malay, Tagalog and Thai in connection with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; the official languages of Nepal (Gurung, Limbu and Nepali); languages indigenous to the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Macedonian and Portuguese.

47. The Office continues to produce materials linked to public information campaigns, including special logos, in all six languages, as well as audiovisual materials such as documentaries, news and human interest stories and training and educational videos in several languages. For instance, the Human Rights Section of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti translated 14 fact sheets on protection and emergencies into Haitian Creole; in October 2012, the Human Rights Adviser in Paraguay launched campaign materials in Spanish and Guaraní; and in 2013, a brochure on the complaints procedure for victims of human rights violations was produced in all six official languages. Reports for the Human Rights Council, including for its universal periodic review mechanism, were produced in all six official languages.

48. The Office has committed to making its main website fully available in the six official languages. Complete content is available in English and partial content is available in the remaining official languages. In response to the growing demand for human rights information in Arabic, the OHCHR Arabic website was launched on Human Rights Day (10 December) 2012. By December 2013, the site had received over 3.8 million page views.

49. From June 2012 to May 2014, OHCHR issued news releases in 24 languages. The Office attempts to target local audiences, including in Korean and Japanese, to highlight the activities of the commission of inquiry on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and in Arabic for the activities of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic.

50. OHCHR has aimed to engage users on social media platforms worldwide, using their languages. While it has used the six official United Nations languages for major social media campaigns thanks to its collaboration with the Department of Public Information, it faces resource constraints in sustaining such multilingual efforts in its daily social media activities. Therefore, for this purpose OHCHR most often uses English; Arabic when the subject matter concerns Arab countries; and Chinese, French and Spanish on an ad hoc basis.

3. Department of Economic and Social Affairs

51. Most of the content of the website of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs continues be available in all official languages. Since 2012, more than 260 stories were translated from English into most of the other official languages. Efforts will be made to make content available in the other five official languages as interest in the Economic and Social Council website increases.

52. Methodological publications on statistics and parliamentary documents are issued in all six official languages. Periodical statistical publications such as statistical yearbooks are issued in the two working languages, English and French, while other statistical publications or documents of strategic importance are occasionally translated by Member States into non-official languages.

53. A team of several United Nations entities, led by the Department's Division for Sustainable Development, conducted online multilingual consultations in English,

Spanish and Chinese to support the preparation of the *Global Sustainable Development Report*. More languages will be added in due course. The United Nations Forum on Forests and other divisions of the Department have often made available documents and other communiqués addressed to Member States in English, French and Spanish.

54. To further enhance multilingualism in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department explores cost-effective and creative alternatives for translation services, including the support of volunteer translators through the network of the United Nations Volunteers programme and translation software. Both options still have to be strengthened to achieve the United Nations translation standard. In addition, the Department is increasingly using visual and multimedia material such as videos and infographics, which require less translation. The Department will also continue to seek support from Member States and universities to assist with translation of website content, publications and training materials.

4. United Nations Office at Geneva

55. As one of the biggest conference centres in the world and the largest office of the Secretariat away from Headquarters, the United Nations Office at Geneva has redoubled its efforts to promote multilingualism in all facets of its work. All official meetings at the Palais des Nations are held with interpretation in the six official languages. In 2013, the Office provided interpretation for 2,727 meetings and translated or edited more than 350,000 pages of documents from more than 50 offices.

56. The website of the United Nations Office at Geneva is entirely bilingual, with information posted in French and English. It will soon include a special portal on multilingualism, with features on interpretation, translation, language training and other useful links. In 2014 the Office launched a new intranet site for its staff members, with information published in French and English.

57. The United Nations Information Service in Geneva produces summaries in French and English of meetings of the Human Rights Council and the Conference on Disarmament that are widely used by delegates, journalists and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The film *One UN in Geneva* produced in 2012 by the Information Service in French and English has been subtitled in Russian and Portuguese by the United Nations information centres in Moscow and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 2014 the Acting Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva started to post blogs related to the work of the United Nations in Geneva in English, French, Spanish and German, thereby reaching a wide public.

58. Since September 2012, the language training programme at the United Nations Office at Geneva has provided language training in the six official languages to a total of 5,379 students in 524 courses. Six new websites with references to resources and information about the six language programmes were developed. Furthermore, the Arabic, Chinese and Russian language programmes were redesigned to better meet the language learning needs of participants, including a course for interpreters with Russian as their third language, to support the work of the Division of Conference Management.

59. The Library at the United Nations Office at Geneva has a rich and historically important collection that covers 123 languages. It collaborates with the Dag

Hammarskjöld Library in a joint programme to digitize Supplements to the *Official Records of the General Assembly* and is completing the digitization of these documents in Arabic, Chinese and Russian.

5. United Nations Office at Vienna

60. In 2013, the Conference Management Service of the United Nations Office at Vienna continued the development of a customized United Nations computer-assisted translation system, eLUNa ("languages of the United Nations"), adopted by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, as part of its integrated global management. The eLUNa tool is integrated with the gText project of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, which encompasses documents management, terminology and computer-assisted translation. In 2014, the United Nations Office at Vienna became the hub for the development of language- and documents-related computer-assisted tools for the Department.

61. As the information service for Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia, the United Nations Information Service in Vienna is committed to producing information materials in German, Hungarian, Slovak and Slovene, plus English, in order to reach the widest possible audience.

6. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

62. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime used its field office network and headquarters-based research and advisory services to provide Member States with technical assistance and related services in all official languages of the United Nations. For instance, programme documents governing operational activities were issued in one or two languages, as needed, with English and Spanish in Latin America and the Caribbean, French and English in West Africa and Arabic and English in Western Asia.

7. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

63. Since its establishment, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has adopted three working languages: Arabic, English and French. ESCWA has undertaken concrete measures to promote multilingualism in order to communicate regional priorities and issues. It ensures translation into Arabic of information and technical material issued by other organizations, such as training manuals, thematic reports and promotional material for universal values and projects.

64. ESCWA has taken a set of measures to promote multilingualism in the composition of its human resources and is keen to attract and recruit staff from various linguistic backgrounds. Job vacancies are issued in English and French and, sometimes, in Arabic. Candidates for any vacant post are required to be fluent in at least two of the languages, and knowledge of additional United Nations official languages is an advantage. ESCWA offers regular language courses to all staff in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, in cooperation with professional academic institutes at the duty station.

65. In all intergovernmental and expert group meetings convened by the Commission, interpretation services are provided in Arabic and English and,

occasionally, in French, in addition to other official languages as needed. Press releases on ESCWA activities and events are issued in Arabic and English and, occasionally, in French. The ESCWA website, in Arabic and English, is regularly updated. ESCWA also maintains a social media presence in Arabic and English.

8. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

66. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is mandated to provide high-quality language services in its four working languages: Chinese, English, French and Russian. Although ESCAP publications are currently issued only in English, the summary of the flagship publication, *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific*, is translated into the other three working languages. In addition, some press releases and statements by the Executive Secretary are translated into Chinese or Russian, as appropriate.

67. The ESCAP website is currently monolingual but is undergoing changes to ensure that it becomes more interactive for Member States. This ultimately may mean that at least some of the major features will be made available in the other official languages as well.

68. In support of General Assembly resolution 67/292, ESCAP offers language courses throughout the year, as well as language proficiency examinations to staff members.

9. Economic Commission for Africa

69. In promoting the economic and social development of its 54 member States, the strength of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) revolves around making knowledge available to the widest possible audience. Given the multilingualism of African countries, language parity plays a central role in this effort. One of the first policies adopted in the context of the ECA reprofiling process that began in September 2012 was to require all information circulars and announcements to be published concurrently in English and French. All ECA website content, including its iSeek pages, was also published in both languages. Since March 2013, the Commission has released all substantive communications, such as press releases, updates and media advisories, in both working languages. Additionally, announcements pertaining to events led by or involving ECA were made available on the website in both languages. ECA vacancy announcements, as well as event banners, posters and the regularly updated calendar of events, follow the same rule.

70. With respect to Arabic, rule 31 of the original 1958 rules of procedure of ECA states that Arabic, English and French shall be the working languages of the Commission. In the absence of a clear definition of "working languages" and owing to resource constraints, Arabic is used only for the annual sessions of the Commission and for the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Office for North Africa, based in Rabat.

71. Portuguese was introduced as a working language of the annual session of the Commission in 2008, with the African Union providing translation and interpretation into Portuguese.

III. Multilingualism and communication

A. Internal communication

72. The United Nations intranet, iSeek, and deleGATE (intranet for delegates in New York) maintain pages in English and French, with all the stories published simultaneously in both languages. Both websites have been moved to a new content management platform that allows for more efficient management of two languages.

B. Public information and outreach

73. The Department of Public Information has redoubled its efforts to find creative ways of providing information on the websites under its control in all six official languages. During the reporting period, gains have been made in narrowing the gap between the content in English and in other official languages. The Department's Web Services Section has created a Web Governance website that provides guidance for all United Nations websites, including the minimum standards for multilingualism.

74. The Department has also provided support to many other departments and offices in the Secretariat in creating new websites in compliance with established standards, for example providing for complete bidirectional script support for multilingualism. The Department has urged departments that are developing websites to consider providing for the resources that will be required for maintenance and updates in all six official languages. Further, the Department has insisted on baseline accessibility considerations, as well as the need to promote coherence of design and functionality. The governance of websites has seen significant gains, as most client departments now understand the need for working with the Department to create a presence in all six official languages. The Department is working to achieve rationalization of the sites the Department designs and maintains, and significant strides have been made since 2012.

75. Several new websites have been created and redesigned since the last report on multilingualism and are maintained in all six official languages. For example, the Security Council website was redesigned with help from the Department in October 2012. In another initiative that is yielding positive results, agreements with universities have allowed substantial quantities of materials to be translated into Chinese and Spanish. Similar agreements are being pursued for other languages. The Chinese Unit, for example, has created more than 20 new sites concerning key issues like human rights, population, crime and corruption, development, human rights and disaster reduction.

76. Live coverage of the annual general debate of the General Assembly saw a new development in 2013: supplementing United Nations Webcast, every statement delivered in the General Assembly Hall was made available in all six official languages. The Department expanded its webcast services and multilingual coverage by providing live webcast coverage of meetings and events in all six United Nations official languages. Making available video on demand for all United Nations meetings in all six languages is being explored in terms of technical and resource requirements.

77. In the period from July 2012 to July 2014, United Nations Television will have produced almost 100 *UN in Action* programmes in all six official languages. In a new initiative, United Nations Television is producing two-minute condensed video programmes called *UN Stories* in all six official languages. The news magazine *21st Century* has begun to produce episodes in Chinese, in addition to French, in cooperation with the China Business Network in Shanghai.

78. By undertaking creative efforts to source content across the United Nations system, it has been possible to find and embed multilingual multimedia content. The Department has worked closely with colleagues in emergencies to ensure that online, audio and video content is produced and distributed in appropriate languages, for example, in French in the Central African Republic. Similar efforts have been made to create content on the Syrian Arab Republic in Arabic and to repurpose content created by other United Nations entities, such as OHCHR.

79. The number of visitors to the United Nations website across all languages has grown exponentially, from 154 million (2010-2012) to 280 million page views (2013-2014). In particular, unique visitors to un.org in Spanish grew from 11 million to just over 15 million, while English registered a virtual threefold increase in page views.

80. *UN Radio* and *UN News Centre*, which draw large audiences, continue to cover breaking news, reports and feature stories across the United Nations system in the six official languages, with radio programmes also being produced in Kiswahili, Portuguese, Urdu, Hindi and Bangla. Departments working in the areas of peacekeeping, human rights and development draw on the language capacity of the Department's news teams, while the Secretary-General's website, a key tool for promoting multilingualism, is updated with content in all six official languages.

81. The Department has also invested efforts in building a United Nations presence across social media platforms in all six official languages, and several non-official languages, by tailoring content to platforms that enjoy popularity in different regions and languages. Across all major platforms, United Nations messages are seen by more than 9 million people on a regular basis. Spanish-language social media accounts have posted steady growth since November 2012, with Twitter followers crossing the 200,000 mark in March 2014. The French-language Facebook account reached 100,000 followers in mid-April, a three-fold increase since April 2013. Meanwhile, Russian-language social media accounts have demonstrated impressive growth, with increases in the number of subscribers of 600 per cent on Twitter, 160 per cent on VKontakte and 150 per cent on Facebook. Arabic social media are being used actively to disseminate United Nations information in the Middle East and North Africa: the Twitter account in Arabic now ranks third behind English and Spanish, while the Facebook account reached 100,000 fans in May 2014 and ranks fourth after English, Spanish, and French. The Chinese social media outlets have the largest audiences by far. With more than 10,000 posts in the first half of 2014, including live interviews with senior United Nations officials, celebrities, important public figures and United Nations Goodwill Ambassadors, the United Nations Weibo site had more than 6 million followers as of June 2014, a 50 per cent increase from 2013.

82. Social media activity in all official languages and across platforms has registered growth, with the Department working vigorously to create partnerships to promote multilingualism across the United Nations system. The Department's social media teams have also lent support to campaigns undertaken by different parts of the United Nations system, including for the United Nations Development

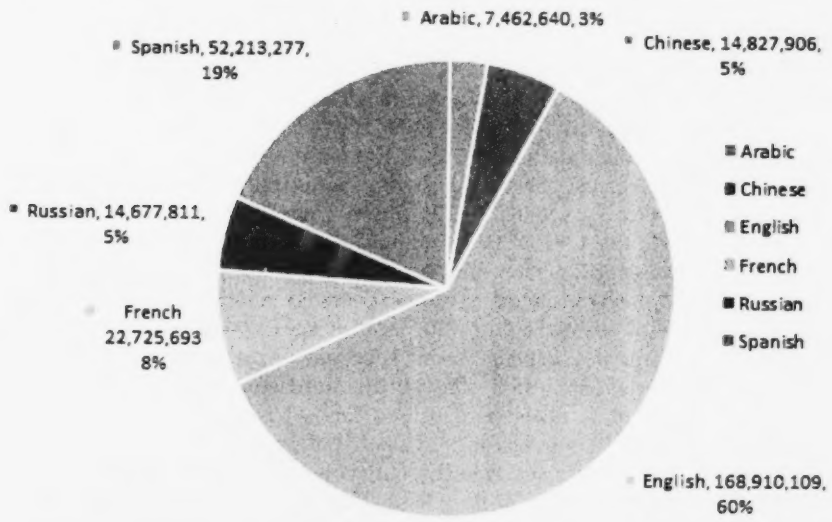
Programme human development index, World Radio Day and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report, *The State of the World's Children*. A recent success was the "My World" survey, which worked with the Web Services Section to increase its outreach in several languages.

83. Overall, these sustained efforts to pursue multilingualism have translated into steady growth in the interactions of the general public with websites in the six official languages, as shown in the table and figures below:

United Nations website traffic by language, 1 June 2012-27 May 2014

Language	*New sessions (%)*	*No. of sessions*	*No. of users*	*Page views*	*Pages session*
Arabic	71.60	3 105 278	2 239 516	7 462 640	2.40
Chinese	74.32	6 292 228	4 749 323	14 827 906	2.36
English	60.42	64 480 663	39 580 932	168 910 109	2.62
French	63.75	8 883 091	5 753 325	22 725 693	2.56
Russian	63.78	6 847 620	4 420 912	14 677 811	2.14
Spanish	70.89	25 005 243	17 912 733	52 213 277	2.09
Total		**114 614 123**	**74 656 741**	**280 817 436**	**2.36**

Figure 1
United Nations website page views by language, 1 June 2012-27 May 2014



84. The language capability of the Department's Non-Governmental Organization Resource Centre to respond to queries from non-governmental organizations was strengthened to include all six official languages, as well as German, Italian, Portuguese and Ukrainian. The Department continued to process applications for association in English, Spanish and French. The concept note for the sixty-fifth annual Department of Public Information/Non-Governmental Organizations Conference, held in August 2014, was produced in the six official languages as well as in Braille.

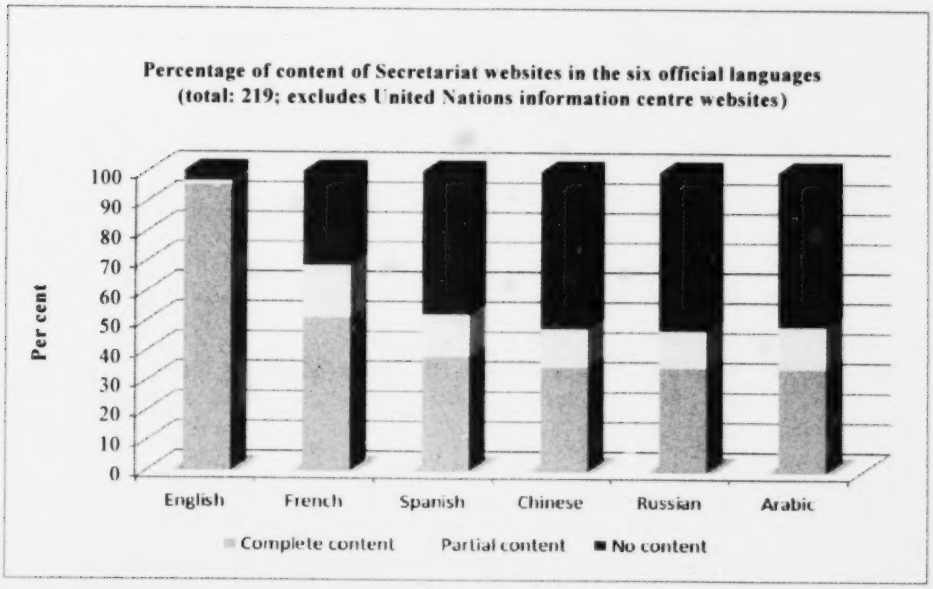
Review of United Nations Secretariat websites

85. As requested in resolution 67/292, a review of United Nations websites was undertaken to assess content discrepancies among the official languages and the status of content in non-official languages. The review consisted of a self-reported assessment that was completed by respective offices of the United Nations Secretariat. This assessment was limited to outward facing websites and reflected the status as of mid-2014.

86. In total, the review comprised 272 websites across the Secretariat, including regional commissions and 53 United Nations information centres. The review found that there is a high degree of adherence to multilingualism by United Nations websites, albeit to different degrees, depending mainly on resource availability. Of the reporting entities, 74 websites had their entire content available in all six official languages. This means that, excluding United Nations information centre websites, which are exempt from the requirement to use all six official languages, more than one third of the websites (34 per cent) were in all official languages. A total of 25 websites used non-official languages, some as many as 10. The review also found 173 websites in two or more languages, including non-official languages.

87. English was the most prevalent language, followed by French and Spanish, as shown in the figure below.

Figure II
2014 Multilingualism Survey



The survey also revealed practical alternatives that offices are choosing in order to ensure that website content is provided in more languages. These include agreements with universities.

88. Although the survey results offer baseline indicators of the status of multilingualism on United Nations websites, supplementary data collection and analysis would need to be carried out in order to track progress, challenges and innovative approaches to further address discrepancies.

C. Documents and publications

89. The Department of Public Information offers United Nations publications for sale in all official languages. During the reporting period, 45 contracts were signed for individual United Nations publications. Translation agreements led to 11 additional language editions of many flagship publications in Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Bengali, Chinese, French, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Latvian, Russian and Turkish, many of which are available electronically. Licensing agreements increased the Organization's visibility worldwide by generating some 19,000 additional printed and over 18,000 electronic pages. The Department also increased the number of language versions of flagship publications offered on its e-commerce website and through local distributors.

90. Also during the reporting period, previous editions of the flagship publication *Basic Facts about the United Nations* became available in Azeri, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian and Spanish, with a Korean and an Arabic version forthcoming; the latter was made possible by a contribution from the United Arab Emirates. While the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, the authoritative reference on the annual activities and concerns of the Organization, is available in full in English only, the online publication *Yearbook Express* features chapter introductions from selected *Yearbooks* in all six official languages, produced by volunteer translation teams. *UN Chronicle*, the quarterly magazine of the United Nations, is available in English and French, in print and online. Resource constraints have impeded the production of online versions in other official languages, with the exception of selected Spanish editions as well as two issues in Korean. The mobile application "United Nations calendar of observances: making a difference" provides information on United Nations observances and achievements in all six official languages, as well as in Bahasa Indonesia, produced by volunteer translation teams. A new educational publication, *Actions for Disarmament: 10 Things You Can Do* will be published in Korean. Discussions are under way with a university in Japan to produce the publication in Japanese.

91. The vast majority of products by the Department's Graphic Design Unit, such as logos, taglines, press kit designs, posters and publications, are prepared in multiple languages.

D. United Nations information centres

92. The network of 63 United Nations information centres epitomizes the spirit of multilingualism along with providing a visible public interface, communicating in English and in local languages. In addition to working in five of the six official languages, United Nations information centres produced print and multimedia

products and promotional materials in 40 languages in 2013. Information centres also maintain websites in 30 local languages.[1]

93. With the growth in new information technology, information centres have expanded their use of websites and social media tools. To date, as many as 48 information centres have Facebook accounts and 40 have Twitter accounts, of which at least 17 are in languages other than English; 29 have YouTube accounts, with 11 in languages[2] other than English.

94. Information centres continued to engage audiences in local languages through traditional media such as radio and television programmes. The information centres were also instrumental in translating and placing opinion pieces by the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials in local media outlets. For example, the Secretary-General's op-ed, "A global movement for change", on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, was placed in approximately 64 outlets in 42 countries in 22 languages.

95. Owing to resource constraints, United Nations information centres are partnering with educational institutions, using the services of interns to produce materials in local languages and engaging United Nations country teams or the United Nations Communications Group to share the costs of printing publications in local languages. With the support of 20 interns, the United Nations Information Centre in Jakarta was able to translate 1,400 United Nations documents in 2013. The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels has an arrangement with major universities whose language students act as virtual interns who translate United Nations documents in exchange for academic credit.

E. International observances

96. For the annual commemorations of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, a website and outreach materials were produced in the six official languages. Posters and postcards were also made available in Kiswahili and Portuguese in 2013 and Haitian Creole in 2014. Students in New York connected to sites in France and Senegal in 2013 and in Haiti and Senegal in 2014, with French interpretation. The Remember Slavery film festival in 2014 presented movies in English, French, Spanish and Wolof. Activities organized in partnership with the International Organization of la Francophonie included a poetry recital in French in 2013 and film screenings and discussions in English and French in 2014. Special events were organized by the Department at Headquarters in commemoration of language months. The United Nations Information Centre in Ankara displayed the Remember Slavery travel exhibit in Turkish and the United Nations Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, did so in Portuguese, while the United Nations Information Centre in Jakarta translated and screened the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization video

[1] Armenian, Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla, Belarusian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, Georgian, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Kazakh, Kiswahili, Malagasy, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Slovak, Slovene, Swedish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Uzbek.

[2] Arabic, Armenian, Czech, French, Japanese, Kazakh, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian.

Slave Routes: A Global Vision in Bahasa Indonesia. In addition, the United Nations information centres have been observing International Mother Language Day since 2000 to raise awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.

97. All websites commemorating international observances continue to be updated and maintained in the six official languages. During the reporting period, more than 10 new observance websites were produced.

F. Visitors' services

98. The Guided Tours Unit continues to reach a vast international audience with multilingual tour guides offering tours at Headquarters in all six official languages, as well as in German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and Swedish. In addition, tours are offered at all four headquarters duty stations in additional languages, with German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Kiswahili, Korean, Portuguese, Slovak and Slovenian among the most popular. The Department further arranges briefings by United Nations officials in the six official languages as well as in German, Italian, Korean, Portuguese and Japanese. A redesigned visitors portal was launched in 2014 in five official languages, and will soon be available in Arabic.

G. Educational outreach

99. The United Nations Academic Impact, in association with ELS Language Services Inc., organized an international student essay contest. The almost 4,000 participants from 128 countries had to write in one of the six official languages that was not their mother language or medium of instruction. A new United Nations Academic Impact website was launched in the six official languages thanks to partnership arrangements with the United Nations Academic Impact member institutions.

100. The Department's The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme has produced several educational resources in the six official languages, including the second volume of its *Discussion Papers Journal* and an educational DVD with subtitles in Czech, Japanese and Portuguese. Materials also included a series of posters, a study guide, handouts and a film in English, French, Russian and Spanish. The programme published another set of posters created by students of design in English, French, Russian and Spanish. These resources are available on the website, which is accessible in all six official languages. In addition, the programme conducted student briefings in English, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

H. Library

101. The United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library completed the digitization of General Assembly official documents (including those of its Main Committees) of the forty-second to forty-seventh sessions as well as plenary meeting records of the first to forty-seventh sessions of the Assembly, in English, French and Spanish. The Library at the United Nations Office at Geneva, which collaborates with the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in this programme, is completing the digitization of the same

documents series in Arabic, Chinese and Russian. It is also digitizing official documents of the Economic and Social Council, the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and the Human Rights Committee in all the available official languages. The United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBIS) thesaurus used for the cataloguing and retrieval of United Nations official documents is maintained in all six official languages. The digital repository, currently in a pilot phase, will digitally preserve United Nations content and provide metadata in all six official languages.

IV. Conclusions and recommendation

102. **As highlighted in the present report, the United Nations continued to improve and seek creative ways to increase its communication with the peoples of the world in their own languages, including in various accessible formats. Reaching diverse audiences through traditional and new media across language platforms is essential to inspiring and engaging the peoples it serves in the aims, purposes and work of their Organization. The Secretariat continued to make every effort to make high-quality content, translation and interpretation available in the six official languages in a timely manner. Formal and informal multilingual outreach programmes and initiatives helped reach out to the global public.**

103. **Additional platforms for disseminating information and providing greater access to information via new technologies inevitably requires additional resources so that departments and offices can keep pace with the needs of audiences across regions and languages. While promoting multilingualism remains a central principle of the United Nations, the feedback received from across the Organization focused on this need, particularly with regard to maintaining websites in multiple languages. In addition, several entities expressed concerns that some creative solutions are not cost-neutral or efficient. For example, drawing on universities and other informal partners for translation requires supervisory time and effort to ensure quality and editorial consistency and does not guarantee the quick turnaround essential for time-sensitive news and information content.**

104. **Emphasizing the importance of multilingualism and public information, the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session took note of a proposal by its Chair to establish a group of friends of the Chair on multilingualism to continue to work with the Department of Public Information on effective, pragmatic and creative ways in which the issue of multilingualism could be addressed (A/69/21, para. 24). It is a timely initiative, offering the possibility for the creation and exchange of ideas with candour, imagination and realism.**

105. **It is recommended that the General Assembly consider taking note of the present report.**